



April 2020

Division of Developmental Disabilities

Coronavirus (COVID-19): How to Protect Yourself

BHDDH Director Power's Corner



**STAY HOME
AS MUCH
AS
POSSIBLE**



**ONLY Go OUT
IF YOU MUST**
»» For EXAMPLE ««
Go OUT for medical needs
Don't Go OUT for a haircut



AVOID CROWDS
If the place you're going
has a lot of people,
don't go in!
Go back later



KEEP YOUR DISTANCE
If you absolutely
MUST go out,
keep 6 feet between
you and other people



WASH YOUR HANDS
Wash them for
20 seconds
every time
»» Do THIS A LOT ««



CLEAN & DISINFECT
Do this to all of
the surfaces you
touch everyday
»» Do THIS A LOT ««



**Do NOT TOUCH
YOUR FACE**
Keeps hands OFF
of your eyes, nose,
mouth and ears



COVER YOUR COUGH/SNEEZE
Cough or sneeze
into your elbow,
or in a tissue
»» THROW AWAY USED TISSUES ««

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF



IF YOU FEEL SICK
»» CALL YOUR DOCTOR ««
Do not go to
your doctor's office
unless they tell you to



IF YOU ARE SICK
»» LISTEN TO YOUR DOCTOR ««
If you MUST go out,
ask them if you need to
wear a mask

STAY INFORMED:

Get Up to Date
News and Information from
The Center for Disease Control:
WWW.CDC.GOV

The Rhode Island
Department of Health:
WWW.HEALTH.RI.GOV



Created by Advocates in Action RI and the RI DD Council
Based on Recommendations from
the RI Department of Health and the CDC
As of March 20, 2020



Greetings,

When I returned to this Department as Director in January, little did any of us know that the Coronavirus (COVID-19) would challenge all of us in ways we could not have imagined just three months ago.



It is my sincerest hope that everyone reading this newsletter is healthy. COVID-19 has changed our everyday life in so many ways. We appreciate the sacrifices you have had to make to ensure the health of all Rhode Islanders. We have been taking many steps to combat this virus through responsive strategies; you can read about them on page 2 of this newsletter.

I am also pleased to announce that DDD Director Kerri Zanchi will remain with the Department for a little longer in order to support the Department as Rhode Island remains under a state of emergency. You can read about the DDD leadership team, also on page 2 of this newsletter.

In the meantime, please stay safe and healthy!

Kathryn
Kathryn Power, M.Ed.
Director

Supporting our Individuals and Families

Until further notice, all calls to the Division for social case work support or for emerging care related situations should be placed to the DDD Main Line – 401-462-3421. We have dedicated staff answering this line and/or responding to messages Monday through Friday business hours (8:30 am – 4:00 pm).

For any after hours urgent support needs which are not related to a health status or medical symptoms, please call 401-265-7461. This call will be answered by a BHDDH coordinator until 10:00 pm daily and on weekends who will refer the call to a DDD Administrator. For all health-related concerns, please continue to follow RIDOH guidelines directing these calls to your primary care practitioners or medical provider.

As always, if you are experiencing any type of serious medical or life-threatening emergency, call 911.

DDD Leadership

As you may know, Kerri Zanchi had planned to leave her position as Director at the end of March. Kerri has agreed to stay on for a bit longer to support the critical work of the BHDDH leadership team during the COVID emergency.

Kevin Savage is assuming primary contact with the DDOs around programmatic needs to include licensing, policy/regulations, and state of emergency resources. He is directly coordinating these areas with RIEMA/RIDOH/BHDDH clinical and administrative leadership.

Kerri Zanchi is supporting the systemic response during this state of emergency. Her work is generally focused around the administrative and programmatic coordination between the funding/operational structure. This is being done in direct coordination with BHDDH leadership and OHHS to inform/facilitate funding options, pathways and related operational processes.

Heather Mincey is assuming lead for the Social Case Workers operations and support; consumer funding/resource needs and related provider technical support. She is also taking point for self-direction and related fiscal intermediary areas.

Marlanea Peabody is BHDDH's liaison with Medicaid. She is working on Medicaid waivers and brings together our Medicaid partners to get authority for emergency funding.

BHDDH and COVID-19

The Division has taken many steps to address COVID-19:

- Received approval for telehealth/telephonic mode of delivery for providers to remotely continue to support individuals living with families, or living independently, for some essential services.
- Implemented policy changes and/or variances to the current regulations to promote responsive hiring practices that will expedite on-boarding of new staff.
- The Department has a supporting daily presence at the Department of Emergency Management Agency for representation of the DD community in emergency preparedness plans.
- Please see the full list on our website.

Please know that we are working with our sister state agencies on responsive solutions to many of the issues that impact us all.

A New Employment Project

We are pleased to announce the new Person-Centered Supported Employment Performance Program (PCSEPP) projects. Each of the four projects will use a customized approach to find a job for those who have never been employed. National experts will help to get the projects started.

“Customized employment” is a different approach to looking for a job. It focuses on identifying a person’s strengths and creating a profile that is used to target businesses where job seeker’s unique characteristics and skills will be seen as assets. We want to lay the foundation to move forward quickly when the safety of our public health permits. Below is the list of the project teams with contacts –please reach out to them for more information.

- [Looking Upwards, L.I.F.E. Inc., & West Bay - Jodi Merryman JMerryman@lookingupwards.org ~ 401-293-5790, ext 375](mailto:JMerryman@lookingupwards.org)
- [Perspectives, AccessPoint RI, & Trudeau Center - Tara Brosnan tbrosnan@perspectivescorporation.com ~ 401-525-1402](mailto:tbrosnan@perspectivescorporation.com)
- [Seven Hills & Trudeau Center - Melissa Charpentier mcharpentier@sevenhills.org ~ 401-597-6700](mailto:mcharpentier@sevenhills.org)
- [Work Inc. & Kaleidoscope - Kristen Piccolo Kpiccolo@workinc.org ~ 617-691-1707](mailto:Kpiccolo@workinc.org)

March was Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

March was National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. Director Power marked the month by hosting a Division of Developmental Disabilities Community Forum in late February to kick-off the celebration, read a proclamation issued by Governor Raimondo and met with individuals and family members.

The Governor’s proclamation stated, in part:

Whereas, Rhode Island is committed to recognizing that every person has unique abilities, has valuable strengths, and accessibility to make important contributions to their communities; and

Whereas, people with developmental disabilities share with all Rhode Islanders the desire to achieve personal success through education, meaningful work, family and community ties; and

Whereas, Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month is an appropriate time to celebrate the contributions of individuals with developmental disabilities within our communities and workplaces.

We could not agree more!

